

# Understanding Mormonism

by Ron Carlson

---

*The speaker emphasizes the importance of confronting Mormons with the truth of biblical Christianity and testing their revelation and teachings by the Bible.*

**Duration:** 1:12:08

**Scripture:** Matthew 1:18, Matthew 16:15

**Topics:** "Mormonism"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having an objective basis of authority to test all visions, revelations, and testimonies. He asserts that God's Word, the Bible, serves as this objective basis. The speaker shares a personal story of his passion for flying and the need to rely on instruments and gauges to survive a dangerous situation. He compares this to the world's current state, describing it as a 'graveyard spiral' and asserts that the Bible is the only gauge that can provide the truth. The sermon concludes with the speaker emphasizing the simplicity of God's love and salvation, stating that a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the key to eternal life.

---

## Transcript

I began dealing with the cults about 11 years ago when I ran into a man named Walter Martin. And Walter has been a real friend and an encouragement to me over the last 10 years. And other people like Mark Allen and the Tanners who have had the tremendous input on how to deal with Mormons.

And I simply stand in their shadow and I feel very privileged to be here. What you just saw concerning the Temple Ceremony, we as Christians have a tremendous responsibility to share our faith with those who are involved in the Mormon religion. 1 Peter 3, verse 15 tells us, As Christians, we are to be ready always to give to every person an answer, a reason for the hope that lies within it.

Jude, verse 3, tells us that we are to contend earnestly for the faith which has been delivered once for all time and to the saints. And that is what we must do as we deal in the battlefield. We saw the Temple Rituals which play such an essential part and the Mormon Church announced that they're going to be building another 16 or so temples throughout the world.

They presently have missions in 83 countries in the world. One of our concerns has been to deal with Mormons on a worldwide scale. I've had the privilege of lecturing now in over 50 countries of the world.

Just returned from 13 countries of Asia. In the Philippine Islands alone, there are over 2,800 Mormon missionaries. They're having a tremendous influence in that country which is 95% Catholic, the third largest English-speaking country in the world.

Throughout Hong Kong, Singapore, beginning to go into South Africa now, throughout Europe, when I was in England just a little while back, we discovered that the Mormon missionaries are going into the Church of Scotland, the Church of England which are virtually dead. In Great Britain, only 2% of the population goes to church. Most of those are old people.

There's a real mission field in Europe itself. So the Mormon missionaries are going into the Church of Scotland, the Church of England and offering to the pastor to start a youth group in their church. And the pastor, not understanding Mormonism, is excited that two young men would come and want to start a youth group in his church.

And this is going on in Scotland and England right now. Tremendous responsibility that we get information to these people around the world. One of the things that continually amazes me is that the average Mormon has never been confronted with the truth of biblical Christianity.

You discover that most Mormons have simply been raised in the Mormon church. They have assumed all their life that they are in harmony with the Bible, and yet they have never checked it out for themselves. You find that those converts who go into Mormonism do not go into it for theology, but for the sugar-coated peripheral issues, business practices, social reasons.

Never understanding the clear distinctions between biblical Christianity and what Mormonism is teaching. Apparently to Galatians chapter 1. Galatians chapter 1. Paul here gives us some verses which are very instructive to us. Galatians 1 beginning with verse 6. He says, I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting him who called you by the grace of Christ for a different gospel, which is really not another.

There are not two gospels. Only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Jesus Christ. But even though we are an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

There the Greek word is anathema, the strongest word possible under the divine curse. Then again he says in verse 9, as we have said before, so I say it again now. If any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you have received, let him be anathema.

It's important never to forget how Mormonism began in the year 1820. With an alleged revelation from a messenger of light who came to one Joseph Smith Jr. at the age of 14 1/2. Joseph Smith says that up to this time he had never before prayed in his life.

But at 14 1/2 he decided to go out into the woods and to pray. He said he wanted to inquire of God which of the Christian churches was right and which one he should join. Now many of you have read this vision, but I want to read it again so that we have an understanding of what is the foundation of this church.

Recorded in the plural great price, Joseph Smith chapter 2. He says, I knelt down and began to offer up the desire of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me and had such an astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction.

But exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me. At that very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction. At that moment some power from actual beings from the unseen world who had such marvelous powers I had never before felt in any being.

Just at this moment of great alarm I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head about the brightness of the sun which descended gradually until it fell upon me. No sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which had held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two personages whose brightness and glory defy all description standing above me in the air.

One of them spake unto me calling me by name and said pointing to the other this is my beloved son hear him. Now my object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the Christian churches or sects was right that I might know which to join. No sooner therefore did I get possession of myself so as to be able to speak than I asked the person of Joseph stood above me in the light which of all the Christian churches was right and which one should I join.

I get the picture of how Mormonism began. At the age of fourteen and a half Joseph Smith says he was seized upon by some enemy of the unseen world. Thick darkness gathered around him his tongue was held down so that he could not speak he was sinking into despair.

All of a sudden there appeared over his head a pillar of light and this light were two personages who he later alleges were God the Father and Jesus Christ. Now he asked these personages which Christian church was right and which should he join. Now here is what the personage of light told him.

Verse 19 I was answered that I must join none of them for they were all wrong. And the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight and that all their teachers were corrupt. Now this is how Mormonism began in 1820.

With a messenger telling Joseph Smith that all the churches were wrong that all the creeds of Christendom were an abomination that means this messenger was telling Joseph Smith that the Trinity, the deity of Jesus Christ the blood atonement, salvation by faith alone in Jesus Christ were all an abomination. Now as you study Mormonism Mormons need to ask themselves the question who was this messenger of light in 1820 telling Joseph Smith that all the creeds of Christendom were an abomination. Was it Jesus Christ? Or was there somebody else speaking from that pillar of light? The church began.

One of the things that has concerned me is that as you deal with Mormons they have never been confronted with the fact that Mormonism is not of the Bible. It is not of God. They have never been confronted with the simple fact of biblical Christianity.

And yet Mormons claim to be in harmony with the Bible. Let me read for you what Bruce McConkie in Mormon Doctrine says concerning this issue. I want to quote from Mormon Doctrine, page 513.

Listen to one of their first apostles, Bruce McConkie, I quote. Mormons take every honorable opportunity to herald the views of Mormonism to the world for they are the pure unadulterated Christianity of old. Mormonism is Christianity.

Christianity is Mormonism. They are one and the same and they are not to be distinguished from each other in the minutest detail, unquote. Going further in Mormon Doctrine, page 333, Bruce McConkie says, quote.

The gospel is a living, abiding, eternal and unchangeable truth that has existed co-equal with God from eternity and always will exist. Now you need to understand that it's the Mormons claim themselves that the gospel is an eternal, unchangeable truth and that you cannot distinguish Mormonism from Christianity in the minutest detail. They are in fact one and the same.

Now people say, well how then do we test Mormon revelation and Mormon teachings to see whether it is from God or not? If someone comes along and claims to have a new revelation from God as does Joseph Smith, how are we to know whether that revelation is from God or not? Well actually it's very simple. The Mormons claim that the same God who has given us the Bible has also given us Mormon revelation. Now the question becomes, how do we know whether that revelation is from God or not? How do we test that? Mormon missionaries will often ask the question.

They say, well do you believe it is possible for God to give a new revelation? My answer is absolutely yes. God is sovereign. And if he wants to give a new revelation today he can anytime he wants to for the simple reason he's God.

But what you need to understand is this. That God has already told us in Malachi 3.6 that he is immutable. He does not change.

In Hebrews 6, 17, and 18 God has already told us that he does not lie. He is consistent in truth. He will never contradict himself.

You see, God is not schizophrenic. He's not going to communicate one truth to one generation and a different truth to another generation. But God is immutable.

He is consistent in truth. He does not change. Therefore if someone comes along and claims to have a new revelation from God and we have many people in churches today who are standing up saying, I have a revelation, I have a vision, I have a prophecy.

Well how are we to test those things to see whether they're from God? It's very simple. Since God does not change, he does not contradict himself. We must always test these latter day revelations, these younger revelations by God's oldest revelation, the Bible.

And if we test that new revelation by God's oldest revelation and we find that it is consistent and in harmony with the Bible well then there's no problem. But if we test this new revelation by God's oldest revelation and we find that it contradicts at any point you must always throw out the younger revelation hold fast to God's oldest revelation for God does not change. He is consistent in truth.

He will never contradict himself. You see, Scripture must be our authority in dealing with the cult. As 5 Thessalonians 5.21 says, Test all things, hold fast to that which is true and good.

2 Timothy 3 says, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for reproof, for correction, for teaching, for training in righteousness. Hebrews 4.12 says that the word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword. Testing all things.

Scripture must be our authority. Now Mormon missionaries, as you know, love to ask you the question, Have you prayed about Mormonism? Have you prayed about the Book of Mormon? Whether these things are true or not? Have you prayed about it? I was speaking back at the University of Virginia recently and a Mormon missionary asked me that question. He says, Have you prayed about it? Whether these things

are true or not? And I said to him, you know, I honestly have.

And I said, God told me that Joseph Smith was a false prophet and Mormonism was a lie. He rocked back on his heels. All of a sudden it became his subjective testimony versus my subjective testimony and we're lost on a sea of relativity.

You see, there must be some objective basis of authority by which you test all visions, all revelations, all testimonies, some form line, some standard by which you judge these things. And God has told us that His word is that objective basis of authority. Now, why is that so important? Well, let me give you an illustration of what I mean.

When I was growing up, I always wanted to be a pilot. And so through junior high and high school, I worked every day after football and basketball practice in a hamburger joint in Long Beach, California, or a restaurant cooking hamburgers. Finally, when I was 16, I had saved up enough money that I took all my flying lessons one summer in three months.

And on my 17th birthday, I was legally old enough to get a pilot's license. Now, to get a pilot's license is very much like going for a driver's exam. The examiner sat in the cockpit of the airplane next to me.

And we took off from Long Beach airport and he asked me to take the plane up to 5,000 feet and we did a variety of maneuvers. Now, one of the maneuvers that he asked me to do that day is what is known as a graveyard spiral. Now, graveyard spiral is this.

You're flying along at 5,000 feet and you begin to pull back on the wheel of the plane. Now, when you pull back on the wheel of the plane, the nose of the plane will go straight up in the air. Now, when the nose of the plane gets straight up in the air, something happens to the plane.

It stops. And when a plane is stopped 5,000 feet up in the air, there's only one way it goes, and that's not up. But what you do is you pull the plane into a stall and you stop.

And then you turn the plane over on its back, upside down, and you begin to dive backwards down towards the earth, spinning around in circles. Now, that's really exciting. First time I ever did it, I threw up all over downtown Los Angeles.

Worse than a roller coaster, there's nothing underneath you. But when I went up with the examiner, we did something even more exciting than that. He first asked me to put on the hood.

Now, a hood is a visor that comes down over your eyes and on both sides so you cannot see outside the plane. All you can see are those instruments, those gauges in front of you. And then with this hood on, this visor, not being able to see outside the plane, the examiner said to me, now, go into a graveyard spiral.

Now, you see, they call it that for a reason. They're wrong, folks. That's where you end up.

What you do is, with this hood on, not being able to see outside the plane, I began to pull back on the wheel. I could feel myself going back in the seat as the nose of the plane went up and stalled, turned the plane over on its back and began to dive backwards down towards earth, spinning around in circles. Now, as I was spinning towards earth, not being able to see outside the plane, something began to happen to me inside, beside my stomach.

All of a sudden, your equilibrium, your sense of balance, your emotions go haywire. It's called vertigo. And the plane will be spinning right, but because your equilibrium is so upset, your mind and emotions will make you think that you're turning left.

And if a person was to rely on their own mind and emotions to get out of a graveyard spiral, they would think they were turning left. So you would compensate by going right, but the plane is already going right. You would go into a worse spin and you would crash.

And you soon discover that there is only one way that a person can survive a graveyard spiral in only one way. And that is to look at those instruments and to look at those gauges and to obey what they are saying, even though it may be different and contrary to how you think and feel, because those gauges tell the truth and they do not lie and you must obey them. And my friends, our world today is in a graveyard spiral.

And a lot of our Mormon friends are in a graveyard spiral and they're heading for a collision. And we desperately need, as never before, some instrument, some gauge that would tell us the truth and will not lie. And you can study all the religions, all the philosophy, economic, and political theory you want, and you soon discover there's only one gauge that will tell you the truth.

That is God's Word, the Bible. And not only does it tell us how we got into this graveyard spiral, but you see, it's the only thing that tells us how we can get out of it. And you see, we must obey it, even though it may be different and contrary to how you think and feel, because it's God's truth and God does not lie.

He is consistent in truth. He will never contradict himself. Now, scripture must be our authority.

Now, in dealing with Mormons, the foundation stones, and we've had tremendous lectures on a variety of different subjects, but ultimately the foundation stone for any system comes down to the doctrine of God. What does a person believe about the doctrine of God? And I would like to just briefly share with you some things as how to deal in this area. When you come to the Mormon doctrine of God, Mormons teach basically four things concerning the doctrine of God.

Number one, Mormons teach that God the Father has a body of flesh and bones. Number two, Mormons teach that God has evolved for mortal man. That God is a man who has evolved and progressed to become a God and he is simply one God in a pantheon of God.

A man in heaven with a body of flesh and bones. Thirdly, Mormons teach polytheism, polytheism, the belief in the existence of more than one God. Mormons believe there are literally thousands and hundreds of thousands of God.

And fourthly, every male Mormon is striving to become a God himself. Let me read for you what their authorities, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, taught concerning the doctrine of God. The sermon given by Joseph Smith two months before he was assassinated in Carthage, Illinois in 1844.

A sermon which was heard by over 18,000 people and taken down by five Mormon scribes. Recorded for us in Times and Seasons, Volume 5, page 613, also in Mormon Doctrine, page 321. Listen to what Joseph Smith said, I quote.

God was once as we are now an exalted man and sits enthroned in yonder heaven. I say if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form, like yourselves in all the person, image, and very

form of man. I'm going to tell you how God came to be God.

We have imagined that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea and take away the veil. God was once a man like us and dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ did.

And you have got to learn to be gods yourselves, the same as all gods before you. Namely by going from one small degree to another, from a small capacity to a greater one. Brigham Young in Journal of Discourses, Volume 3, page 93 says, The Lord created you and me for the purpose of becoming gods like himself.

We are created to become gods like unto our Father in heaven. Brigham Young in Journal of Discourses, Volume 10, page 223 goes on to say, quote, Man is the king of kings and the lord of lords in embryo. Did you get that? Man is the king of kings and the lord of lords in embryo.

He goes on, Gods exist, and we had better strive to become one with them. A plurality of gods exists. Indeed, this doctrine of plurality of gods is so comprehensive and glorious that it reaches out and embraces every exalted person each.

Those who obtain exaltation are gods. Lorenzo Snow, the past president of the Mormon Church, put it succinctly this way, As God is, as man is, God once was. As God is, man may become.

Men in Journal of Discourses, Volume 1, page 123 would read, listen carefully, Remember that God, our heavenly Father, was once a child and mortal like we are, and rose step by step in the scale of progress in the school of advancement, has moved forward and overcome until he has arrived at the point where he is now. And then in Doctrine and Covenants, section 130, verse 22, we read, God the Father has a body of flesh and bone as tangible as man. Now this is Mormon doctrine.

You need to understand that Bruce McConkie in Mormon doctrine says that you cannot distinguish Mormonism from Christianity in the minutest detail. They are one and the same. Therefore, we must with Mormons simply test Mormon revelations by God's word, the Bible, to see if they are one and the same or not.

To begin with, number one, Mormons teach that God the Father has a body of flesh and bone. What does the Bible say about this? Take me to John chapter four. John chapter four, verse 24.

The only passage in the New Testament concerning the nature of the Father given to us by the one who knows better than anyone else, that is Jesus Christ himself. John four, verse 24, Jesus said, God is spirit. The Greek literally says, God is pure spirit.

And those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Now the logical question to ask yourselves is this. Well, what is a spirit? If God is spirit, what is a spirit? Turn over to Luke chapter 24 and Jesus defines for us what a spirit is.

After his resurrection, he appeared to the two on the road to Emmaus and then to his disciples. In Luke 24, verse 37, it says that they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. But Jesus said to them, Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your heart? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself.

Touch me and see, for a spirit does not have, what? Flesh and bone as you see me have. Jesus said, God is spirit. A spirit does not have flesh and bone.

A couple of years ago, I was watching the semi-annual convention televised here from Salt Lake. LeGrand Richard was giving an apologetic on the nature of the father trying to prove that he was a man in heaven with a body of flesh and bone. And Richard had just finished trying to prove that when he went to talk then about who Jesus Christ was.

And I wish I had a videotape of it. It was unbelievable. But he began his apologetic on Christ by quoting Matthew 16.

You might turn back there with me. And as he read it, his voice gradually tapered off to silence and he became quite aware that he should not be reading this after what he just finished trying to prove. Matthew 16 verses 15 to 17, Jesus said to them, But who do you say that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but whom? But my Father, which is in heaven. Peter, my father, he said, is different from flesh and blood. Jesus said, God is spirit.

A spirit does not have flesh and bone. But secondly, Mormons teach that God has evolved from mortal man. That God is a man who has been evolving and changing and progressing and that he's a man in heaven with a body of flesh and bone.

I was speaking back in Bismarck, North Dakota in the city auditorium two weeks ago and several thousand people there and a lady came up to me afterwards who was a Mormon. She said, I've been a Mormon 15 years. She said, you said that God has been changing, that he has changed.

She said, I don't believe that. I said, well, ma'am, I said, Joseph Smith taught that God has evolved and changed from man. Brigham Young taught it.

She said, well, God is not changing now. I said, but was there any point in past eternity at which God changed? She said, well, that doesn't matter to us because he's not changing now. I said, but was there any point in eternity at which God changed? She said, well, that was long before history, before it concerned us.

But I said, he did change. Well, that was a long time ago. God has changed at all, my friends.

He's no longer God. What does the Bible say about this? Numbers chapter 23, verse 19 says, God is not a man that he should lie, nor is he the son of a man that he should repent. Hosea 11, 9 says, I am God and not man.

I am the Holy One in your midst. God is the Holy One. He's not a man who's evolving and changing.

Malachi 3, 6, he says, For I, the Lord, I do not change. Psalms 90, verse 2, he says, From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. God is not in a process of evolving and changing as the Mormons claim.

From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. One of the problems you soon discover, as you know in dealing with Mormons, is that all of Mormonism was one gigantic contradiction. Mormons don't even believe their own books.

For example, you can go to the book of Mormons. Turn to the book of Mormons. For example, chapter 9, verse 9, For do we not read that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever? And in him there is no variableness, neither shadow of changing.

Or turn over to Moroni, chapter 8, verse 18, For I know that God is not a partial God, neither a changeable being, but he is unchangeable from all eternity to all eternity. The sad thing is, Mormons don't even believe their own books. Book of Mormon contradicts Doctrine and Covenants.

Doctrine and Covenants contradict Pearl of Great Price. They all contradict the Bible. They all contradict Joseph and Brigham.

Mormons find themselves caught up in this internal contradiction and fallacy one after another. And this is why we have seen in the last few years the Mormons in their training of their missionaries have had to throw out all objective logic. So they now teach their missionaries this very subjective logic so that if you ask them, How do you know Mormonism is true? They say, I know it's true because I prayed about it and the Spirit told me so.

And then they say to you, Have you prayed about it? And as I shared with you earlier, I tell them I have prayed about it and God's Spirit told me Joseph Smith was a false prophet and Mormonism was a lie. And then you're lost on a sea of relativity, his testimony versus my testimony. There must be some objective basis of authority by which you test all revelation, all teaching that is the Word of God.

What the Mormons have ended up worshiping, my friends, is they worship a man in heaven with a body of flesh and bones. You need to understand when the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sings the great anthems of the church, they're singing about a finite man, sexually procreated by his Father God and Mother God, who has evolved and changed to become a God in heaven with a body of flesh and bones. A man in heaven.

If you turn with me to Romans 1, Paul tells us about the great lie of the ages. Romans 1, verses 22 and 23. Listen very carefully.

Romans 1, verses 22 and 23. The apostle Paul says, professing to be wise, they have become full because they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man. My friends, this is precisely what Mormons have done.

Paul says, professing to be wise, they have become full and have exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God who does not change for an image in the form of corruptible man. But thirdly, Mormons go on to teach polytheism, the belief in the existence of more than one God. Mormons believe that there are literally millions of gods.

Father gods, Mother gods, great-great-grandfather gods, great-great-grandmother gods, on and on. What does the Bible say about this? Turn back with me to Isaiah 44. Isaiah 44, verse 6. Thus says the Lord God, King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the first, I am the last, and there is no god besides me.

How many gods are there? God says, I am the first, I am the last, besides me there is no god. Look at verse 8, the end of the verse. Is there any god besides me, or is there any other rock? I know of none.

Now if God doesn't know of any other god, what makes Joseph and Brangham think they do? Look at Isaiah 45, verse 5. I am the Lord, there is no other, besides me there is no god. Verse 6. That there is no one besides me, I am the Lord, there is no other. Verse 14, the end of the verse.

Surely God is with you, there is none else, there is no other god. Verse 21, the end of the verse. And there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior, there is none except me.

Verse 22. Turn to me and be saved all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is no other. Are you starting to pick up a pattern here? What God says.

Chapter 46, verse 5. To whom then would you liken me, and make me equal and compare me that we should be alike. Verse 9. Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other. I am God, and there is no one like me.

God says there's not even anybody like him. He is the first, he is the last, besides him there is no god. My friends, simply put, the difference between Mormonism and Christianity is simply the difference between polytheism and monotheism.

Nowhere in the history of the church or scripture could a polytheist ever be a follower of God. It was for polytheism that God destroyed the nations around Israel. It was for polytheism that God destroyed Israel and sent it into exile.

It was for polytheism that God destroyed Judah and sent it into exile. And God absolutely condemns polytheism. And yet, fourthly, every moral Mormon is striving to become a god himself.

Joseph Smith said you must strive to become a god just as all gods before you have, namely by going from one small degree to another, from a small capacity to a greater one. Is it possible for Mormons to become gods? Look at Isaiah chapter 43. Let's see what God says about it.

Isaiah chapter 43, verse 10. You are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and my servant, whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Now God says, I want you to know, I want you to believe, I want you to understand something.

What is it? Before me, there was no god formed, and there will be none after me. I am the only God. My friends, the reason why Mormons will never make it to godhood is because God says so.

God says before me, there was no god formed, and there will be none after me. I am the only God. God says I am the first, I am the last besides me.

There is no god. I often like to say to Mormon missionaries, did you know the doctrine that you can become a god is in the Bible? Did you go there? Yeah! Turn to Genesis chapter 3. And the serpent said to the woman, you surely shall not die, for God knows in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God. My friends, the reason why I cry for Mormons, the reason why we care so deeply for them, is because the same lie that got Adam and Eve cast out of the garden of Eden, is the same lie that is going to keep Mormons out of heaven.

I eat of the fruit. You can be God yourself. Paul says, professing to be wise, they have become fools.

They have exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man. You know, you got to start asking yourselves the question, who was that messenger of light in 1820 telling

Joseph Smith that all the creeds of Christendom were an abomination? It's interesting to me that Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 11, verse 14, he says, Beware, for Satan comes as a messenger of light seeking who he may deceive. My friends, when you look at the revelation brought by that messenger, it is not of God.

It is from the pit of hell. And I cry and I weep and I plead with Mormons. Think.

Your eternal destiny depends on it. I was speaking recently in a large auditorium in the Midwest. The night I spoke on Mormonism, we had several thousand people there and five minutes into my lecture, all of a sudden, the back doors of the auditorium open up and in comes walking 25 Mormon missionaries and five Mormon bishops.

And they come and they walk and I'm five minutes into my lecture already and they come walking right down the center aisle while I'm speaking and the front row is open. They come and sit across the front row, all 30 of them, hold their arms, and stare at it. It is great.

And they came, they knew there was going to be a time for questions and answers, so they came, they were really going to give it to me. After the lecture, it was obvious they were not prepared for what they had heard and when you open up for questions, you could have heard a pin drop in the auditorium. Everybody, of course, knew they were there and there was absolute silence and Mormon missionaries kept looking back and forth at each other trying to figure out what they should say and there was silence for 40 seconds.

And then finally one elderly bishop who evidently felt he had to defend the faith stood up and he said, but I know we're right. I said, sir, I said, how do you know you're right? He said, we have the priesthood. We have the authority.

Common arguments you hear all the time. We have the priesthood. We have the authority.

And I looked down at the gentleman that night with all the love and compassion I had and I said, but sir, if you have the wrong God, your priesthood is meaningless. You have no authority if you have the wrong God. You see, my friends, if you have the wrong God, nothing else matters.

The whole system collapses. Professing to be wise, Paul says they become fools in exchange for the glory of the incorruptible God who does not change for an image in the form of corruptible man. Either the fruit, you can be God yourself.

My friends, if you have the wrong God, you have no priesthood. You have no authority. If you have the wrong God.

Well, who then is the Mormon Jesus Christ? My friends, if you have the wrong God, you have no priesthood. You have no authority. If you have the wrong God.

Well, who then is the Mormon Jesus Christ? As we saw last night in the film, Mormons teach that Jesus is the brother of Satan, that he was a polygamist, married to the two Marys of Marth on earth, that he was not conceived by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, but they teach two things, depending on who you listen to. Brigham Young taught that he was conceived by Adam God. They now teach in Articles of Faith that he was conceived by a resurrected glorified man.

Either one is corrupt. They say that the blood of Jesus Christ is ineffective for cleansing some sin. The blood of Christ, as we heard the Sackets tell us.

They don't want the blood of Christ. They don't want the cross of Christ. It has no meaning.

Let me read for you what Brigham Young taught concerning Jesus Christ. The Mormon Church has been, of course, trying to cover this up for the last several years. In Journal of Discourses, Volume 1, page 1551, listen to what Brigham taught.

When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who was the father? He was the first of the human family.

Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the Garden of Eden and who is our Father in Heaven. Now remember from this time forth and forever that Jesus Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. When our father Adam came into the Garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body and brought Eve, one of his celestial wives, with him.

He is our father and our God and the only God with whom we have to do." Now, of course, Mormons say that they don't believe that. Mormons have one basic problem, though. The problem is that Brigham Young is their prophet.

And you cannot contradict Brigham Young saying the Mormon Church is his authority when he talks on matters of doctrine. And if there are any Mormons who deny that, you might simply remind them Brigham Young gave this sermon on April 9, 1852. It was then printed in Journal of Discourses, Volume 1, page 1551.

And then 19 months later, it was again reprinted in the official publication, the Millennial Star, Number 48, Volume 15, on November 26, 1853. And Brigham Young himself declared in Journal of Discourses, Volume 13, page 95. He said, quote, I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men that they may not call it scripture, unquote.

This was Mormon authority. Now they teach that he was resurrected or born by a resurrected, glorified man. Well, what does the Bible say? In Matthew 1, verse 18.

Now, the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. Not Adam God, not a resurrected, glorified man.

The Mormons also teach that the blood of Jesus Christ is ineffective for cleansing some sins. Let me read from Walter Martin's book. He has put this in.

From Journal of Discourses, Volume 4, page 385. It's also found in McConkie's Mormon Doctrine, page 92 and 93. There is not a man or a woman who violates covenants made with their God that they will not be required to pay the debt.

The blood of Jesus Christ will never wipe that out. Your own blood must atone for it. The judgment of the Almighty will come sooner or later and every man and woman will have to atone for their own sin.

All mankind love themselves. Let those principles be known by an individual who will be glad to have his blood shed. I could refer you to plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain in order to

atone for their own sin.

This is loving our neighbor as ourselves. If he needs help, help him. If he wants salvation, and it is necessary to spill his own blood on earth in order to be saved, then spill it.

Brigham Young should know he is part of the Danite band which oversaw the killings of many that they might atone for their own sin. Now, some people will say, but Mormons don't really believe that, do they? Well, you might remember that four years ago we had the first execution of capital punishment in this country in over 12 years. It occurred here in the state of Utah, a man named Gary Gilmore.

A lot of people never understood why Gary Gilmore pleaded to be executed here. See, Gary Gilmore was a Mormon, and he had committed, according to Brigham Young, the unpardonable sin of murder. Brigham Young said, for that sin you must atone by the shedding of your own blood.

You see, that is why the state of Utah is the only state out of 50 which has execution by firing squad. You see, gas chambers and electric chairs do not shed blood. Mormons believe that the moment those bullets pass the heart of Gary Gilmore, and Gary Gilmore, Gary Gilmore then atoned for his own sin as the blood spilled forth.

It's interesting if you read last year's bestseller by Norman Mailer entitled *The Executioner's Song*, which is now being made into a movie. Norman Mailer, in doing research on Gary Gilmore, discovered that on the day of the execution, the state attorney general of Utah did not even bother to wake up the governor to see if he wanted to save the execution because he says he knew the governor, being a Mormon, would want to aid Gilmore in his salvation. What does the Bible say about this? Come with me to 1 John 1. 1 John 1, verses 7 and 9. For he will walk in the light as he himself is in the light.

Verse 7. We have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from some sins. By the way, you're shaking your head. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from what? You better underline that.

The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. Verse 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from what? Underline it, from all unrighteousness. Look at 1 Peter 1. 1 Peter 1, verses 18 and 19.

Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold or bullets from your fewer way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with the precious blood as of the lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Jesus Christ. My friends, we are not redeemed with perishable things. We are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

When I was down in Australia recently, the sheep ranchers were telling me about how oftentimes in a large flock of sheep, when the mother ewes are giving birth to their lambs, that oftentimes a mother ewe will give birth to a stillborn, a dead lamb. And somewhere else in the flock, a mother ewe will die in giving birth to a live lamb. And the sheep ranchers would take that orphan lamb who had lost its mother, and they would bring it to the mother who lost her baby in order to have it nurse and feed and suckle.

But that mother ewe, when she smells the fleece of that orphan, she can smell that that is not her baby. And she will always kick it away and will not allow it to nurse and feed. The sheep ranchers discovered down there that if you took that stillborn dead lamb and cut the fleece, the outer coat of that lamb off, and placed it as a covering over that orphan, then when they brought it to that mother, she smells that covering

that that is her baby, and she will allow it to nurse and feed and suckle.

You see, my friends, it's the same way with our relationship with Jesus Christ. The Bible says that God is holy. Man is affected with a spiritual disease called sin.

God who is holy cannot look on man's sin. Man cannot reach God because of that. So God and his infinite love reached down to us in Jesus Christ.

If you read Hebrews 7, 8, 9, and 10, it says that Jesus Christ became the eternal Lamb of God. He became the infinite sacrifice who shed his blood once for all time for the remission of sins. By his nature, he was not simply a man dying for another man.

No, he became the eternal Lamb of God. The Jews on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, once a year on Yom Kippur, they will bring a lamb to sacrifice for the sins of the people. But they have to come back the next year and bring another lamb to sacrifice because it is a finite sacrifice.

Hebrews tells us that Jesus became the eternal Lamb of God. He became the infinite sacrifice who shed his blood once for all time for the remission of sins. So we can come to him by faith and receive that free gift of eternal life.

So that when God looks down on us, he no longer sees our sins, but he sees the blood of Jesus Christ that covers and washes us and allows us to come back into a personal relationship with him. So that's good news. What then is Mormon salvation? Mormons, as you know, teach that salvation is a combination of things.

We've heard much about it. Salvation comes not simply by faith, but through baptism in the Mormon Church, through obedience to the laws and the ordinances of the Mormon Church, good works, temple rites in and through the Mormon Church, membership in the Mormon Church. Let me read for you from *Doctrines of Salvation, Volume 2*. This is also found in *McConkie's Mormon Doctrine*, page 670.

I quote, If it had not been for Joseph Smith and the restoration, there would be no salvation. There is no salvation outside the church of Jesus Christ, Latter-day Saints. Unquote.

On October 3rd, 1976, I was watching the semi-annual convention from Salt Lake. Howard W. Hunter of the Council of Twelve Apostles was speaking. Howard W. Hunter said, quote, Salvation is a process of self-perfection in and through the Mormon Church.

Unquote. Salvation is a process of self-perfection in and through the Mormon Church that you must earn and work for your salvation through membership in the Mormon Church. If it had not been for the Mormon Church, they said there would be no salvation through the keeping of the laws and the ordinances.

What does the Bible say about this? Turn with me to Galatians, chapter 1. Or Galatians, chapter 2. Galatians 2, verse 16. Paul wrote the entire book of Galatians for the Mormons. The bad thing is they never read it.

Galatians 2, verse 16. We read, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but through faith in Christ Jesus. Even we have believed in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, since by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Ephesians 2, verse 8 and 9, we read, For by God's grace you have been saved through what? And that, not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest anyone should boast. Look with me at 1 John 5. 1 John, chapter 5, verses 11 to 13.

And the witness is this, that God has given us what? Eternal life. Underline. And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is found in membership in the Mormon church through baptism, obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Mormon church, good works in and through the Mormon church, and temple rituals in and through the Mormon church.

You're shaking your head. And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in the Baptist church. God has given us eternal life, and this life is where? In His Son, Jesus Christ.

He who has the Son has what? Has life. He who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you, who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may guess that you have eternal life.

In order that you may hope that you have eternal life. What does he say? He says, I want you to know. He says, I don't want you to hope or guess about it.

He says, I want you to know. He that has the Son has life. I speak on a lot of university campuses, and students often say to me, but it's too simple.

It's too simple. I say to them, ah, that's the greatness of God. For God so loved the whole world that He made it so simple.

He made it so simple that the academic professor could understand it. The little wash lady down in El Salvador could understand it. For God so loved the whole world He made it so simple that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

It's not found in any church. Someone said walking into a church does not make you a Christian any more than walking into a garage makes you a car. It doesn't work that way.

A personal relationship in Jesus Christ. You cannot earn it, you cannot work for it. My freshman year in college I lived with a fellow from Thailand who had been a Buddhist until he was 18 and he became a Christian.

He was here studying in the States. I asked him one day, I said, Lou, why did you become a Christian? I said, what is the difference between Buddhism and Christianity? And his answer could be applied very well to Mormonism as well. He said, Ron, when I was a Buddhist, it was like I was drowning in a big lake.

And I did not know how to swim and I was going under for the third time. And he said, Buddha walked up to the edge of the lake. And Buddha began to teach me how to swim.

Buddha said, start moving your arms and legs. But Buddha said, you must make it to shore yourself. He said, then Jesus Christ walked up to the edge of the lake.

But Jesus Christ did not stop there. Jesus Christ dove into that lake and he swam out and he rescued me. He brought me to shore.

And after he had brought me to shore, then he taught me how to swim. So I could go back and rescue others. My friend, there is a vast difference between Christianity and any religion.

You see, Christianity is not a religion. The religions of the world are man's attempts to reach God through his good works, through his sacrifices, through his rituals, through his temples. But the Bible says that all our righteousness put together is as filthy rags before a holy God.

There is none righteous, no, not one. We're all sinners in the same boat. And because we cannot reach God through our religion, The great truth of Christianity is that God and his love reached down to man in Jesus Christ.

Made a way that we could come back into a personal living relationship with him for which we were created. God does not change. His love does not change.

He is a gift of God, not of works. Oh, what freedom that brings when we know that. Let me just close by giving a word of encouragement to those who are witnessing the Mormons.

I find that oftentimes we can learn everything we can about Mormonism. But then oftentimes when we come to the place where we need to begin to use that knowledge, we all experience fear. And oftentimes we're afraid that if we share our faith, we might fail.

What if we talk to somebody, our neighbor or a Mormon missionary or something, and they ask us a question we don't know. And it's amazing to me how many people I discover who live in the fear of failure. They're afraid to witness or share their faith because they're afraid they might fail.

I remember when I was in high school, Josh McDowell came to our church in Long Beach and Campus Crusade was having beach evangelism. Crusade was using the surveys, religious surveys. I was in ninth grade and I was all excited because I was going down to win Newport Beach for the Lord.

We went down to Newport Beach and they gave us each ten surveys and ten for spiritual laws. I talked with six people and gave them the survey and none of them wanted to become a Christian. And I got really discouraged.

Man, here I was trained, I was quick, I was ready to win the world and nobody wanted to become a Christian. I thought, what's wrong with me? And I felt like a failure. I was so miserable I went through the other four surveys in the trash and went swimming.

I was really discouraged. And I felt like I had failed. Now I realize that none of you have ever had this experience.

But then one day I was reading in my devotions, I came across 2 Corinthians 5, where it says that we are to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ. We are to be his personal representatives. And then I was reading over in John 16, and Jesus says in John 16, that it is the Holy Spirit's job to convict people of sin, to persuade them and draw them to Jesus Christ.

When I began to realize that, that it was not my job to convince and persuade and debate with everybody to become a Christian, that was the Holy Spirit's job. My job was to be a faithful representative and ambassador for Christ. When I realized that, it was like a big burden came off of me.

Hey, it's not my job to bring everybody to Christ. It's only the Holy Spirit who can bring people to Christ. My job though is to be a faithful representative.

So I went out and I began to witness. And you know people would ask me questions, and I didn't know the answer to. Now at first I thought, boy, I failed.

They asked me a question, I don't know the answer to. But you know what I began to discover? When somebody asked me a question I didn't know, I went and found the answer. I went and got Kingdom of the Colts, and I began to memorize Kingdom of the Colts.

Then I went back and started witnessing again. And I had the answer the next time, but they asked me another question I didn't know. Man, I had to go back and start reading Kingdom of the Colts again.

It's a true story about Thomas Edison. In inventing the light bulb, Thomas Edison tried over 800 different ways to make a light bulb before one finally worked. And somebody asked Edison one day, they said, man, didn't you ever get discouraged? I mean, you failed over 800 times.

And Edison looked at the man and he said, sir, I have never once failed. He said, every time a light bulb did not work, he said, I discovered a brand new way how not to make a light bulb. And to him it was success.

He turned his failures into stepping stones to success. My friends, if you want to be an ambassador for Christ, if you want to share your faith, I guarantee you, you're going to have times where you're going to fail. And the best way to learn is to get out there and fail.

Get out there and fail and fail and fail because you'll come back and you'll find the answer. People ask me questions, I simply say to them now, well, I don't know, but I'd sure be glad to find out the answer. Somebody has the answer.

Then I'm very quick the next time. But don't stop witnessing because you're afraid to fail. Be like Edison.

Turn your failures into stepping stones to success. I went to Peter, you know. Peter saw Jesus walking on the water.

He said, Lord, let me walk up to you. Jesus said, come on, Peter. Well, Peter, man, he got so excited.

He got stepped out of the boat. It wasn't too cold. So he put both feet up and he started walking out towards Jesus.

Peter got about halfway out to Jesus. All of a sudden he put his eyes down on Peter. Wow! Look at Peter walking on the water.

What happened to Peter? Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Now, it's interesting. Did Jesus walk over to Peter and say, Peter, Peter, you are really stupid.

Peter, why don't you go ahead and drown? Just get out of my life. You're always failing. No, Jesus walked over to Peter and he said, Peter, Peter, I love you.

Peter, let me help you back up. Peter, put your eyes on me and follow me. Who was it that said, Lord, everybody else may leave you.

Not me. I'll follow you to the end. Who denied him three times before the cock crowed? Whatever they do.

Well, Peter, he had a mouth shaped like a foot. He was always failing. He was always blunted.

But you want to know something? Jesus never once condemned him. He never once put him down. He said, Peter, I love you.

Peter, let me help you back up. Peter, put your eyes on me and follow me. One day Peter preached to 3,000, preached and 3,000 people became Christians.

That's pretty good preaching. You're going to fail a lot of times. But turn your failures into success.

And one day God will make you into that kind of light bulb he wants you to be. I was reading last night in my devotions in Genesis about Abraham. You know, Abraham was quite a man.

God called him from the era of the child of Eve. He says, Abraham, I want you to go to a foreign country that you've never been before, a foreign country of Canaanite. Why don't you take your wife and go? And Abraham left everything, home and family, took his wife, and he traveled far across the flood of Crescent over into Canaan.

And there in Genesis chapter 12, he says to Abraham, Abraham, I'm giving you a promise, Abraham. Abraham, through you, I'm going to make a great nation. Abraham, I promise that to you, all the nations of the earth through you will be blessed.

And Abraham settled in Canaan. If you go on in Genesis, Abraham gets to be 99 years old. And Abraham says to God, God, you promised me a great nation.

God, you said all the nations of the earth are going to be blessed for me. God, you know, I don't even have a son yet. My wife is 90 years old.

God said, Abraham, I'm going to give you a son. And Abraham, I promise that through you, I'm going to build a great nation. Abraham, through you, all the nations of the earth are going to be blessed.

As you read through Genesis, Abraham comes to the end of his life. Living in a tent, he says, Lord, God, where is this great nation? God, you said through me, all the nations of the earth will be blessed. God, where is it? God looks down at Abraham.

He says, Abraham, you'll become a great nation in 1,000 years. 1,000 years, Lord? But you said that through me, all the nations of the earth will be blessed. God looks down at Abraham.

He says, Abraham, that's not going to happen for another 2,000 years. Abraham looks up, he says, Lord, God, God, what do I get? What do I get, God? God looked down at Abraham. He said, Abraham, Abraham, I give you myself.

And Abraham, you will be known as a friend of God. Abraham, that is enough. That is enough, Abraham.

Let me encourage you folks. So many times we're out there in the spiritual warfare, and we say, God, when do I get the computerized mailing? When do I get the television programs? When do I get the university with the prayer tower and the praying hands? God, when do I get all this? And my friend, God, looks down on each one of us. He said to me, I give you myself.

That is enough. When I come to my end, end of my life, the greatest epithet anybody could put on my gravestone was to say, here lies someone who is a friend of God. When we'll be out in the warfare, spiritual battle, struggling, you say, am I alone? God says, I'm with you.

That is enough. To be the friend of God. Oh, Heavenly Father, we bow before you this morning.

We worship you as the only sovereign, the creator of the universe. You alone are the King of kings and the Lord of lords. You alone are self-existent.

You alone are immutable, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent. You alone are holy and righteous. You do not change from all eternity to all eternity.

You are God. And as to you, we humbly bow before you this morning. We give you ourselves.

We give you our praise. We give you our worship. We adore you, Lord.

We want to express to you this morning that we love you. We are sorry to leave you, God. We love you.

We want to be your servants. We want to be found faithful. And at the end of our lives, people will say, there was a friend of God.

Oh, we love you, Lord. Give us love and compassion for our loved ones, our friends, our neighbors. May your Holy Spirit, God, penetrate their hearts.

Break those bonds. You alone can draw people to yourself. Intercede for us, Lord.

To you we give the honor and glory, which alone belongs to you. In Jesus' precious and holy name. Amen.

Correspondence to Ron Carlson may be addressed to Saints Alive at PO Box 1076, Isquat, Washington. Isquat is spelled I-S-S-A-Q-U-A-H, Washington, 98027, USA.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19849.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ron-carlson/understanding-mormonism/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**